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1858. The twenty-fourth volume of the results of the exploring expedition, "General Physics," was prepared by him (nearly ready for the press), but was never published, although money was appropriated by Congress for that purpose. It was to contain moon culminations for longitude; transit observations of the sun and stars, for error and rate of astronomical clock; reduced rates of clock or chronometer, by transit of stars, &c., &c.; pendulum observations—not the least valuable those made on Mauna Loa, Hawaii; magnetic observations for variation, dip, and intensity; tides, heights, and a variety of subjects, principally the result of his own observation and experience.

Admiral Wilkes was emphatically a hard worker, never idle; and his efforts in behalf of science were fully appreciated and acknowledged by many learned societies, as were also his nautical achievements. He was made the recipient (1848) of a splendid gold medal, awarded by the Royal Geographical Society of London, in acknowledgment of his discovery of the Antarctic Continent. In 1862, the merchants and citizens of Boston presented him with an elegant sword, and he was complimented with honorary membership in several scientific associations in this country and abroad.

It is worthy of note, that Admiral Wilkes, but a few days after the registering telegraph of Professor Morse was put in operation between Washington and Baltimore, in 1844, by a series of observations, having a well-rated chronometer at each end of the line, determined the difference of longitude between the two cities.

ALEXANDER BRAUN.

ALEXANDER BRAUN, one of the ablest botanists of our day, died at Berlin, on the 29th of March last, after a short illness. He was born at Ratisbon, May 10, 1805, and therefore had not quite completed his 72d year. In his childhood the family removed to Carlsruhe, where his father took an appointment in the postal service, and at length became postmaster-general of the Grand-Duchy of Baden. Just fifty years ago, Braun was a student at the University of Heidelberg with Agassiz, Carl Schimper, and Engelmann as intimate companions. Our associate, Dr. Engelmann, is now the sole survivor. Braun, Schimper, and Agassiz soon went to Munich, where Oken, Schelling, Döllinger, and Martius (just returned from Brazil) were teaching: but the party, Schimper excepted, was again united at Paris in 1832. The alliance with Agassiz was cemented by the marriage of the latter to Braun's sister.

Braun's predilection for botany must have developed early; for the long series of his communications to the scientific journals began in 1822, when he was only seventeen years old. Upon the completion of his university studies, he became Professor of Botany and Zoölogy in the Polytechnic School at Carlsruhe. He was transferred to the botanical chair at the University of Freiburg in the Breisgau in 1846, accepted a call to that of Giessen in 1850; but in 1851, upon the death of Link and Kunth, he was appointed Professor of Botany and Director of the Botanic Garden at Berlin, where his useful life has just closed. Although the name of Braun is not connected with any discovery of the first order, yet he early took and has well maintained a leading position in the science. He was a botanist of wider culture and acquirement than is now common; but his strength was given to morphology and to the systematic botany of the higher and some of the lower Cryptogamia. His earliest contribution of considerable extent and permanent importance is his memoir upon the arrangement of the scales of pine-cones, published in 1830, which opened the prolific and interesting subject of phyllotaxy. It is understood that the first steps in this direction were taken by Braun's fellow-student, Carl Schimper, who, however, published nothing upon the subject, either then or since: so that, practically, the development of the doctrine was left to Braun, whose memoir is classical. Next to this paper in importance and extent is his memoir on Rejuvenescence in Nature, especially as exemplified in the Life and Development of Plants, which first appeared at Freiburg, in 1859, and then at Leipzig in 1851; and which was reproduced in 1853, in an English translation, by the Ray Society. This, and his paper on the Individual in Plants, which appeared at Berlin in 1852, are writings in which his powers of philosophical generalization as well as of acute observation are strikingly manifested. His systematic work, ranging over a variety of topics, is equally marked by acute insight, close observation, and scrupulous exactness. His investigations of *Marsilia*, *Isoetes*, and their allies, are most complete. Upon the *Characeæ* his first essay bears the date of 1834, and various papers have followed from time to time; but, overtaken by official duties during all his later years, his general work upon the subject has not appeared; yet we may hope that it is left in a condition for posthumous publication. Systematic botanists of ability and experience nowhere abound. In the early part of Braun's career, Germany had its full proportion; but owing to the almost exclusive preference for histology of late years, there are now extremely few, and the loss of a veteran like Alexander Braun will be sadly felt.